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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 STATE 097472

SIPDIS

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TAGS: KCFE PARM PREL OSCE

SUBJECT: NATO/VCC: GUIDANCE FOR SEPT 21 MEETING

REF: (A)USNATO 316, (B)STATE 95492, (C)STATE 93327,
(D)USOSCE 198

Classified by Richard A. Davis, VCI/CCA Office Director,
for reasons 1.4(B) and (D)

¶1. (C) This is an action cable. U.S. goals for the
September 21 Verification Coordinating Committee (VCC)
are as follows:

--Provide U.S. reaction to the draft International Staff
(IS) VCC Experts Terms of Reference;

--If raised, provide U.S. views on Russia's Vienna
Document 1999 (VD99) inspection in Belarus;

--Provide U.S. preference for supplemental experts
meetings in support of verification activity
coordination and deconfliction;

--Provide an update on U.S. activities.

U.S.--Russian Bilateral Update

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¶2. (C) VCI Assistant Secretary Rose Gottemoeller met
with Russian Disarmament Director Anatoly Antonov in
Geneva on September 3, 2009, to informally explore
possibilities for a way forward on CFE. Washington
provided Allies with a preliminary readout of the
meeting in capitals soon after, and Allies received a
detailed briefing at the September 17 HLTF. If VCC
members request an update on the status of negotiations,
USDel should defer to the Chair to provide a summary of
the HLTF readout.

VCC Experts Terms of Reference

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¶3. (C) In response to discussions over the role of VCC
Experts, the International Staff on August 19 issued
AC/319-WP(2009)05 proposing a Terms of Reference (TOR)
for the VCC Experts Group. Washington has reviewed the
draft TOR and generally supports the paper as written.
USDel should discourage substantive changes that would
broaden the scope of the draft TOR. In addition, USDel
should offer the following clarifying points and
recommendations:

--The U.S. supports the direction the IS has taken and
offers the following recommendations for clarity:

--References--In line with para 2--"....IAW VCC
decisions:" a reference decision referring to the review

of NATO School Oberammergau POIs should be added to the references.

--Para 3--The U.S. understands that the phrase "will task" implies that such VCC taskings to the Experts Group will be by consensus.

--Para 4--The U.S. understands para 4 to say that any recommendation forwarded from the Experts Group to the VCC must first reach consensus in the Experts Group. For clarity, we would propose adding the phrase "forwarded to the VCC" between "...Expert Group" and "must..."

--Para 6--We note that it has been common practice for Experts to meet in December for CFE allocations regardless of whether the VCC is meeting. We propose adding the phrase "unless otherwise agreed" to the end of the sentence.

¶4. (C) If the draft TOR text receives widespread support, USDel should not block consensus. However, if it appears that the IS will issue a revision, USDel should request that the new version reflect the clarifications listed above. USDel should report any substantive edits.

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Russia's VD99 Inspection in Belarus

¶5. (S) On August 29 the Russian Federation sent a Vienna Document notification (CBM/RU/09/121/F33/0) requesting an inspection in Belarus from 1-4 September 2009, thereby exhausting the remaining 2009 inspection quota in Belarus. The U.S. had planned (in conjunction with Norway) to conduct an inspection of a notified exercise scheduled for late September. According to Belarus' notification (CBM/BY/09/0054/F25/C), the combined exercise, "West 2009", will involve a total of 12,529 personnel, including 6,820 from Belarus, 5,680 from Russia and 29 from Kazakhstan. It will be the largest exercise to be conducted in the region in many years and will involve a level of forces just below Vienna Document thresholds for observation (13,000 personnel, 300 battle tanks, 500 ACVs, and 250 artillery pieces). Separately, and also in line with VD99, Belarus invited neighboring ps (Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine) to observe the exercise. USOSCE has delivered points to Russia, Belarus and Allies per Ref C.

¶6. (C) USDel should attempt to meet with the Norwegian delegation before the VCC to inform reps of our general response, including our approach to Belarus, in the event they plan to comment on the inspection at the VCC. As required, USDel should draw from the following as required to respond to potential Allied questions:

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-- A Vienna Document inspection would have allowed for a unique opportunity to study this "West 2009" exercise. Unfortunately, this will not be possible, due to Russia conducting an inspection in Belarus in early September.

--Regarding Belarus' response: Belarus has correctly notified the exercise in accordance with the provisions of VD99. In addition, Belarus invited neighboring countries, including three NATO members to participate in an observation event. Finally, while the U.S. currently does not have a military Attaché accredited to Belarus, we have received an invitation for our Attaché in Kiev (accredited to Belarus) to attend the observation event. While we would not expect the level of transparency provided by a one-day observation program to approach that provided by a VD99 inspection

or a Chapter VI observation visit, it seems clear that Belarus has made an effort to meet its VD99 obligations.

--The U.S. approached Russia and Belarus in Vienna and encouraged them to consider providing additional measures of transparency. Per Ref D, Belarus undertook to convey our points of concern to Minsk for further review. Per Ref D, Russia's JCG representative, Ulyanov said he was unaware that Russia's inspection had exhausted the quota for Belarus and would have to speak to Moscow for greater clarity before writing a formal cable back to Moscow. Ulyanov asked what type of transparency measures the U.S. envisioned and added that the Russian MOD had taken a dim view of voluntary measures recently, feeling that such measures were always one-sided.

--Regarding future allocations and scheduling: The U.S. would be interested in hearing Allied opinions on whether further review of allocation and deconfliction procedures is warranted in an effort to ensure quotas are available for conducting inspections of exercises notified later in the year.

Update on Verification Activity

VD99:

17. (C//REL TO USA, BEL, BGR, CAN, CZE, DEU, DNK, ESP, EST, FRA, GBR, GRC, HUN, ISL, ITA, LVA, LTU, LUX, NLD, NOR, POL, PRT, ROU, SVK, SVN, TUR, and NATO) The United States, with a guest inspector from Belgium, conducted a VD99 specified area inspection in southern Turkmenistan from 15-18 June 2009. The specified area encompassed approximately 22,000 square kilometers and included the cities and towns of Ashgabat, Gazandzhik (Bereket), Gyzylarbat (Serdar), Kaka (Kaakhka) and Tejen (Tedzhen). The escort team provided access to the specified area in accordance with the provisions of VD99. Briefings were

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provided on 23 formations and units with peacetime locations in the specified area. Inspectors were granted limited access to the garrisons and equipment of these formations and units. The Turkmen escort team provided a helicopter overflight of the specified area, including over military garrisons, and did not restrict photography. Inspectors did not observe field training under way in the specified area

CFE:

18. (C//REL TO USA, BEL, BGR, CAN, CZE, DEU, DNK, ESP, FRA, GBR, GRC, HUN, ISL, ITA, LUX, NLD, NOR, POL, PRT, ROU, SVK, TUR and NATO) The United States, with guest inspectors from Romania, Slovakia, and Turkey, conducted a CFE Treaty declared site inspection of the 79th Separate Airmobile Brigade (URN S725) at Nikolayev, Ukraine, from 20-23 July 2009.

--The inspection report included no ambiguity but included a substantive comment regarding the presence at the site of one R-161B HF/VHF radio station on the chassis of the MT-LBu variant of the MT-LB APC that had been neither notified among the holdings of the brigade nor briefed as present;

--The brigade commander stated that the unit had recently returned from an exercise in which the scenario was to "re-take" Crimea from an invading force;

--Since the previous CFE inspection conducted in 2006, the declared site had decreased in size significantly;

--The team confirmed the presence of all conventional armaments and equipment subject to the Treaty (CAEST) that Ukraine had reported for the brigade in its CFE data declaration as of 1 January 2009.

19. (C//REL) The United States, with guest inspectors from Italy, the Netherlands, and Norway, conducted a CFE declared site inspection of the 527th Motorized Rifle

Regiment (URN AM-0600) at Vaik, Armenia, from 24-27 August 2009. The inspection report included no ambiguity but included a substantive comment regarding the inability of the inspection team to confirm the regiment's holdings of artillery as reported by Armenia in its CFE data declaration as of 1 January 2009 because the Armenians said the artillery pieces "were deployed to the border." Inspectors confirmed the presence of the regiment's other holdings of TLE (13 ACVs) except for one BMP-1 AIFV that was reported to be at the 205th Armored Equipment Technical Maintenance Base (URN AM-0490) at Yeghvard.

¶10. (C//REL) The United States, with guest inspectors from Germany, Norway, and Poland, conducted an above quota CFE declared site inspection of the 93rd Separate Mechanized Brigade (URN S692) at Cherasskoye, Ukraine, from 14-17 September 2009. (No further details at this time)

¶11. (C//REL) Russia refused a request by the United States to conduct a CFE declared site inspection from 24-27 August.

¶12. (C) Changes to U.S. Schedule: VD99
--U.S. to Kazakhstan will be rescheduled from calendar week 39 to calendar week 42 (11-17 October).
--U.S. to Kyrgyzstan has been scheduled for calendar week 43 (18-24 October).
--We have no changes to the CFE schedule.

¶13. (C) Preference for deconfliction meetings in November and December: There was a question concerning an extra day for the meetings in November and December to allow for the allocation and deconfliction process. If it is decided to allow an extra day during both November and December, then our preference in November would be Wednesday, 18 November and in December, we would prefer Friday, 18 December.

CLINTON